



Special Wilderness Public Use Limits & Closures for 2012 March 1, 2012

Temporary Grazing Restrictions

Stock parties may camp in areas that are closed to grazing, but are required to either hold and feed their animals or graze them in other sites in the area that are open to grazing.

- A trial rest rotation system includes three primary meadows in Evolution Valley:
 - **Colby Meadow** (33-3). Temporarily closed to grazing.
 - **McClure Meadow** (33-2). Open to grazing.
 - **Evolution Meadow** (33-1). Grazing limited to 175 stock nights.
- **Darwin Meadow** (33-4.3). Temporarily closed to grazing; grazing is available at the adjacent pocket meadows.
- **Upper LeConte Canyon Meadow** (39-1). Temporarily closed (above 10,000 feet elevation) to grazing due to the potential for stock impacts on mountain yellow-legged frog habitat.
- **Big Pete Meadow** (39-2). Grazing limited to 50 stock nights by private and commercial parties only. Commercial users are requested to work with area ranger on grazing practices. Open to limited administrative grazing.
- **Upper Vidette Meadow** (65-3). Open to grazing by private parties only.
- **Junction Meadow** (Bubbs Creek) (66-3). Due to flooding, the lower portion of Junction Meadow is closed to grazing. Grazing of the upper portion of the meadow is limited to private parties and 50 stock nights for the Cedar Grove Pack Station only.
- **Scaffold Meadow** (69-5.1)/**Lackey Pasture** (69-4). Lackey Pasture is open to public use with a three-head, two-night stay limit. The 15-head, two-night stay limit for Scaffold Meadow is defined such that these limits are combined to apply to the entirety of both Scaffold Meadow and Lackey Pasture.
- **Redwood Meadow** (77-5). The lower (north) section of Redwood Meadow is open to private and commercial grazing with a two-night stay limit. For commercial packers, grazing is limited to 32 nights. The upper (south) portion of the meadow is open for up to 100 nights of administrative grazing or 65 nights if the year is dry.
- **Wallace Creek Waterfall Meadow** (81-2.3). Open to grazing with a six-head, one-night grazing limit.
- **Upper Crabtree Meadow** (83-4). Grazing limited to 75 stock nights.
- **Lower Crabtree Meadow** (83-5). Grazing limited to 40 stock nights.
- **Lower Whitney Creek Meadow** (83-7). Grazing limited to 55 stock nights by private parties only.
- **Lower Rock Creek Crossing Meadow** (84-2). Grazing limited to 200 stock nights.
- **Upper Rock Creek area**: Two-night stay limit for all upper Rock Creek area; Nathan's Meadow and above.
- **Nathan's Meadow** (85-10). Grazing limited to 75 stock nights.
- **Lower Rock Creek Lake and Stringer Meadows** (85-8). Temporarily closed to grazing.
- **Forester Lake Meadow** (89-5.2) and **Summit Lake Meadow** (90-18). Temporarily closed to grazing.
- **South Fork Meadow (Rock Camp)** (90-10). Grazing limited to 75 stock nights.
- **South Fork Pasture (Upper Camp)** (90-11). Grazing limited to 100 stock nights.

NOTE: The special grazing restrictions that follow are in place to prevent the spread of velvetgrass, an invasive weed, on the floor of the Kern River canyon (see Special Bulletin for additional information).

- **Kern Ranger Station to Laurel Creek**: Meadows between the park boundary at the Kern Ranger Station and Laurel Creek are closed to grazing. Administrative grazing of **Lewis Camp** (86-7) and **Kern Station Small Pasture** (86-8) is allowed with fencing to prevent the spread of seeds from infested areas. Meadows closed to all grazing include **Lower Funston Meadow** (86-5) and **Rattlesnake Camp/River Pasture** (86-6).
- **Laurel Creek to Kern-Kaweah River**: Grazing of meadows between Laurel Creek and the Kern-Kaweah River is limited to parties accessing the canyon from the west, north, or east. Parties entering the park from the south passing through USFS lands are required to pack in feed and hold their stock once velvetgrass begins flowering. Meadows affected include **Junction Meadow** (82-1), **Kern Bridge Camp** (86-1), **Upper Funston Meadow** (86-2), and **Twenty-one Inch Camp** (86-4). Grazing at **Upper Funston Meadow** (86-2) is for commercial and private users only.

Temporary Campfire Restrictions

Special closures allow for continued recovery of the down-wood resource. Several heavily used areas are closed to campfires due to a lack of dead and down wood and damage to standing and live trees resulting from firewood scavenging.

Kern River Drainage: Campfires are prohibited: above 10,400 ft., and above 10,000 ft. at these specific locations:

Nine Lakes Basin, Big Arroyo areas and within ¼ mile of the food storage locker at Lower Crabtree Meadow.

These restrictions are in place to protect the valuable foxtail pine down-wood resource.

Temporary Food Storage Restrictions

Effective 5/01/2012 to 10/31/2012: To preserve the natural behavior of bears and to protect visitor safety, **portable, park-allowed, food-storage canisters or panniers (with the capacity to store all garbage, scent and food items) are required** for all overnight parties entering and or exiting the following areas:

- **Rae Lakes Loop & Vicinity** – All area users (with the exception of long distance through hikers on the Pacific Crest Trail & John Muir Trail with a valid wilderness permit) must use portable, park-allowed, food-storage canisters or panniers or camp at sites with food-storage lockers and use the lockers.
- **Dusy Basin Area** – All area users.
- **Rock Creek Area** – All area users (with the exception of long distance through hikers on the Pacific Crest Trail with a valid wilderness permit) must use portable, park-allowed, food-storage canisters or panniers or camp at sites with food storage lockers and use the lockers.

The technique of counterbalancing or hanging food is prohibited in the above areas. These restrictions are in effect from May 1 through October 31. Outside this time period, counter-balancing of food is only allowed when snow prevents access to food-storage lockers. Posting of “alert” guard as a food-storage technique is prohibited throughout the parks.

Off-Trail Group Size Limits

In 2012 the parks are continuing an off-trail group size limit in five specific areas. As more large groups have ventured off developed trails, impacts have increased, including trampling of vegetation and erosion. In the areas listed below, groups that travel ½ mile off maintained trails are limited to no more than 8 individuals (people and stock combined).

- **Lamarck Col, Darwin Canyon and Darwin Bench Area** – west of park boundary/Sierra crest; east of John Muir Trail; south of Mt. Goethe; north of Mt. Darwin.
 - **Dusy and Palisade Basin Areas** - west of park boundary/Sierra crest; east of John Muir Trail; south of Mt. Goode; north of Norman Clyde Peak.
 - **Sixty Lake and Gardiner Basin Areas** - west of John Muir Trail; east of Paradise Valley trail; south of Woods Creek trail; north of Bubbs Creek Trail (i.e. inside of Rae Lakes Loop).
 - **Sphinx Creek and Lakes, and Mt. Brewer Range Areas** – east of Reflection/East Lakes Trail (to Mt. Jordan); west of Avalanche Pass/Cloud Canyon Trail; south of Bubbs Creek Trail; north of Kings Canyon/Sequoia Park boundary.
 - **South of Mt. Whitney: Crabtree Lakes, Miter Basin, Mt. Langley, and Army Pass Areas** – west of park boundary/Sierra crest; east and north of Pacific Crest Trail; south of Mts. Russell & Young.
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Sixty Lake Basin - Temporary Restriction for Stock Parties - Day Use Only – No Grazing

Stock travel in Sixty Lake Basin is restricted to the established trail to a point approximately 1.8 miles from the junction of the John Muir Trail with the Sixty Lake Trail, and is only permitted as a Day Use activity. Stock must be held to keep them from impacting wet areas (meadows and lakeshores) thus protecting Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog breeding and egg-laying habitat. Baxter Creek Drift Fence Meadow (58-3), located 6-7 miles away, is a viable alternative grazing area.

Pear Lake & Emerald Lakes Basins - Temporary Camping Limit Restriction

Effective 5/15 to 9/30/2012. To reduce overcrowding, total overnight campers will be limited to 25 people per night per lake-basin at Pear and Emerald Lakes. All wilderness permits for the Lakes Trail, to Pear and Emerald Lakes, will be issued by the Lodgepole Trailhead Office. No advance reservations of permits will be taken for the Lakes Trail during the affected time period. Camping in the area will continue to be at designated camping sites only.

How to obtain additional wilderness information on Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

- Visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/wilderness.htm for general information
- Visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/stockreg.htm for stock use restrictions.
- Visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/camp_bc.htm for campfire restrictions.
- Visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/canisters.htm for food storage restrictions.
- Phone the Wilderness Office at 559-565-3766 for questions and to request printed material.

Thank you for your assistance in protecting the wilderness of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. If you have any questions or suggestions regarding these restrictions, please contact Gregg Fauth, Wilderness Coordinator, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Three Rivers, California 93271; (559) 565-3137.